

Mauritania desert locust update **11-20 August, 2005**

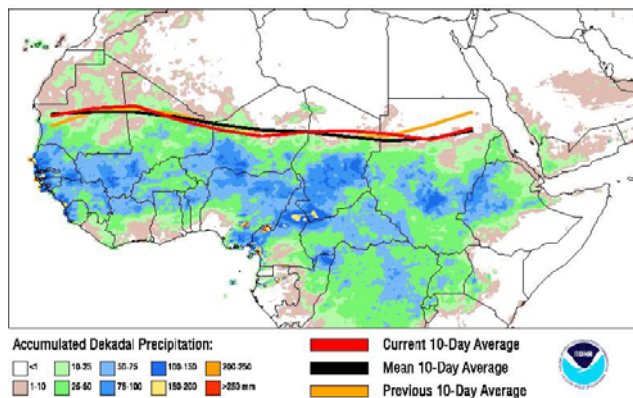
Summary

The desert locust situation in Mauritania remained calm during the second dekad of August. Only a few solitary mature adults were seen in a few places in the north, central and southern parts of the country. No significant development is expected in the coming weeks.

Meteorological and ecological conditions

The Sahel portion of the ITCZ over Mauritania and neighboring countries largely remained near the median position for this period. However, two strong easterly waves that passed through the region beginning on August 14th caused a significant shift in the ITCZ location, i.e., 28 degree north on August 16 and 18 degrees north the next day and resulted in widespread rains in the region (see maps below). As a result, ecological conditions have begun improving in several places in the northern, central and southern parts of the country.

Current vs Mean Position of the Africa ITCZ
As analyzed by the NOAA Climate Prediction Center
August 2005 Dekad 2



Locust situation

Mature solitary individual locusts were sighted on 8/13 in Belel Gaouda (16°27N/13°48W) (2 insects/site) Brakna, on 8/14 in Ebtah Leechoucha (1 insect/site), Adrar and on 8/13 and 14 (3 insect/site) in Taskast, Assaba. Solitary 2nd instar hoppers (1 insect/site) were also detected on August 18 at two locations (17°20N/10°59W and 17°09N/11°01W) in

Assaba. Locust numbers were far below control intervention threshold in all places.

Action

25 survey and intervention teams and 6 specialized teams, including central coordination, logistics, maintenance, monitoring of ground control team and health environmental safety have been deployed. One helicopter has been dispatched as of August 6, 2005 to conduct survey and control in inaccessible areas as necessary.

Forecast

As a result of the rains that began falling in June in a few places in the central and southern later in northern parts of the country, ecological conditions are becoming more and more favorable for the solitary locusts to breed and increase in number. Vigilant survey and monitoring are essential to avert any significant increase in locust numbers, which, if unchecked, could further escalate.

Situation in neighboring countries

Despite favorable ecological conditions in the invasion areas in **Senegal**, all surveyed areas remained free of locusts during this period. No locusts were reported in **Mali** and **Burkina Faso** and the situation remained relatively calm in **Niger** during this period.

It is worth mentioning that **Senegal** recently donated **15,000 liters** of pesticide to **Eritrea** for locust control and such action needs to be encouraged in other countries where considerable stocks of leftover pesticides from the 2004/05 locust campaign exist. A pesticide past its shelf-life could become a serious health and environmental hazard.

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